

# IDAHO SDI PROJECT-STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

## SUMMARY NOTES FROM MCCALL-JUNE 10

Prepared 6-19-2008

### Introduction

These are summary notes from the stakeholder meeting for Idaho Spatial Data Infrastructure Planning Project on June 10, 2008 in McCall. The main objective of the project is preparing strategic and business plans to guide long-term development and enhancement of a statewide SDI. This is one of six regional stakeholder meetings conducted at different locations around the state (other locations include Lewiston, Post Falls, Pocatello, Twin Falls, Nampa) during the month of June. The purpose of these meetings was to:

- Get input and ideas for achieving the SDI
- Learn about status of stakeholder GIS use, business needs, and ideas on direction and goals
- Build stakeholder understanding of and support for statewide SDI development

Participants are encouraged to submit comments, clarification, additional points, etc. Comments and mark-ups may be submitted in electronic form (highlighted mark-up of this document) by **July 14, 2008**. Please submit via email to Gail Ewart ([gail.ewart@cio.idaho.gov](mailto:gail.ewart@cio.idaho.gov)) and Peter Croswell ([pcroswell@croswell-schulte.com](mailto:pcroswell@croswell-schulte.com)).

### Meeting Participants and Contact Information

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### Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Business Drivers and Business Needs for GIS
3. High-level Characterization of GIS Status and Obstacles
4. Geospatial Data Activities and Needs
5. Ideas for Improvements to Statewide GIS Access and Coordination
6. Brainstorm Session on Mission, Vision, and Goals for Implementing Idaho's Spatial Information Infrastructure
7. Summarize Results of Meeting and Identify Follow-up

## Summary Notes

Business Drivers (major program area, need, or challenge that GIS technology and geospatial data can help support or address)

- Flood event management: Includes use of GIS to help delineate more accurate flood boundaries and to plan for potential impact from flood events
- Emergency event management and response: Use of parcel and other local data to support response to fires
- Support for local permitting activities: Use of GIS by internal staff as well as external parties (public, developers) to support land development permit application and review (building permits, etc.). Example: use of GIS to easily determine corporate boundaries, zoning, other factors impacting permit criteria
- Land use policy development: GIS support for policies and ordinances impacting land use decisions using parcel- and building-based geographic analysis (e.g., evaluation of building height restrictions). Issues is that GIS provides a more effective geographic context for visualizing impact of policies.
- Real Property Appraisal: use of GIS to support more equitable and complete appraisal of parcel values. GIS can ensure that all parcels are being accounted for and that appraisals are consistent. Also, GIS is tool to support examination of regional and neighborhood factors that influence valuation (sales history and physical attributes). GIS can be used to “defend” appraisals in response to appeals and Board of Equalization reviews.
- Support for infrastructure facilities management and maintenance. Use of GIS to support maintenance of roads, bridges, culverts. Note: American Society of Civil Engineers issues “report card” on nation’s infrastructure—possible support for GIS?
- Public information distribution for forest land (USFS) access (e.g., closure areas, fires areas)

## Current GIS Status, Obstacles, Limitations

- Current use in McCall area by USFS (Payette National Forest). Use the BLM land status information and NRIS. Main applications are fire status maps.
- Ada County carried out major reorganization of GIS program as part of overall IT in County. \*\*get documents from Anne K on organizational study and justification.
- Current GIS use by the City of McCall and Valley County; initial selling of ideas was a big hurdle
- Obstacle for staff GIS adoption: Workforce awareness and acceptance of GIS technology. Issue for mid-level staff and technical people—particularly “older” staff not willing to learn new skills and techniques. Solution: more effective training but, in many cases, just wait for staff turnover.
- Awareness of and support from senior management: need to find better ways to build understanding, trust, and acceptance by senior management and elected officials
- Need better training and awareness for general public and to offer better access tools by the public
- Statutory limitations: some state laws do not address GIS-related issues. This is most evident in public access laws and inconsistencies at the local level on policies and procedures for access and distribution of GIS data and products—including policies for fee setting. There is need for more consistent policies that can be applied statewide in a way that does not result in inhibiting access to GIS data. Also, many statutes that mention mapping are geared toward paper maps.
- Data Confidentiality: Policies regarding information confidentiality are unclear in the context of GIS data and products. One area of ambiguity is parcel ownership data—normally considered public data but sometimes restricted from access via GIS applications. Need consistency at local level.
- Field access to GIS: Great opportunities but still obstacles in effective field-based GIS applications and platforms as well as wireless access.
- Metadata: metadata is important but often off-the-shelf software tools do not provide the most effective, easy way to query and access metadata and present it in a form that is useful. Solution: better custom applications for metadata capture and access.
- Time commitments: hard to find time for important GIS collaboration and communication activities with other job commitments
- GIS data access: Need easier, more intuitive ways to access geospatial data while adhering to important security issues.
- Counties felt ITC support had dropped significantly in recent years; some improvement being seen now

## Geospatial Data Status and Needs

- Framework Themes: Gail Ewart discussed current Idaho Framework Data Themes (commonly needed data by majority of stakeholders) with idea that this definition can be adapted as part of this SDI project. Current Idaho Framework Themes are a) Geodetic Control, b) Cadastral, c) Orthoimagery, d) Transportation, e) Land Use/Land Cover, f) Hydrography/Watersheds, g) Elevation, h) Governmental Units.
- Status of Framework development work at state level:
  - GIO preparing proposed process for standards making and approval
  - Imagery – 2009 NAIP partnership purchase. Contribution commitments & upgrade needs
  - Cadastral Reference (updating GCDB). Assessors and surveyors are also involved; plans are beginning to gel; led by Sheldon Bluestein
  - Parcels – working on goals and objectives for statewide ownership; led by Craig Rindlisbacher and Jeff Servatius
  - Geodetic Control – ITD has agreed to be the lead agency for Height Modernization. Next steps include writing a proposal
- Orthoimagery: Gail Ewart discussed current project in place for full state coverage of orthoimagery as part of Farm Service Agency National Agricultural Imagery Program (NAIP). This will deliver 1-meter resolution (3-bands) statewide with opportunity for increased resolution and IR band for selected areas. This is leaf-on coverage. Mechanism is set-up to support contributions of funding for consortium purchase. Gail mentioned survey of orthoimagery needs carried out as part of this planning effort\*
- Orthoimagery: 1-meter imagery statewide is good but urban areas need higher-resolution—at least 1-foot. 3-year refresh cycle or more frequent is needed for areas experiencing growth.
- Parcel data: Issue of ground coordinates and distances (used by surveyors) is different from State Plane distances because State Plane is based on a geodetic surface at lower elevation to average elevations in Idaho. The difference is about 1 part per thousand so does NOT cause much problem for most applications.
- Parcel boundary accuracy: need adequate parcel boundary accuracy in GIS. State Tax Commission provides minimal cartographic accuracy requirements (State Mapping Manual) but actual mapping accuracy varies among counties. Need to recognize that parcel boundaries in GIS are NOT the legal boundaries—legal boundaries are always defined in legally recorded documents (plats, deeds, licensed surveys).
- Metadata: metadata is important but often off-the-shelf software tools do not provide the most effective, easy way to query and access metadata and present it in a form that is useful. Solution: better custom applications for metadata capture and access.
- Governmental Boundaries: In some cases, county and state boundary lines are not accurately delineated (in low-populated areas). Not extremely important for immediate resolution of these boundary problems unless in urban areas. Very important to pin down corporate boundaries of cities and to get up-to-date information on annexations.
- Water/Sewer Systems: Maintained by mix of municipalities and independent utility districts. Water systems infrastructure important as an element of “critical infrastructure” with potential data/system security concerns. Need data standards for GIS capture and maintenance of water and sewer data. Important to capture boundaries of utility service areas particularly where they constitute taxation districts (needed by State Tax Commission).
- Data Scale/Accuracy Issues: Need to have GIS data model that incorporates range of scale and accuracy of GIS data—allowing some data sets of lower accuracy (statewide data sets) with local data. Important point however, locally generated data (parcel, address, infrastructure) is vitally important for many state and federal agencies.
- Wide area of sources of geographic data makes it more complex to find data that might be useful. Increases needs for data search and locate tools
- IDTM single zone: There is existing “single zone” map projection and coordinate system (IDTM). This works well but is not automatically “understood” by all software platforms so there is still some difficulty in exchanging data based on IDTM. State Professional Surveyors Association is currently involved in rewriting state statutes to recognize use of IDTM.

## Discussion on Draft Vision and Mission (reaction to draft Vision and Mission statements prepared by the Executive Steering Committee)

### **Draft Vision:**

"Idaho's spatial data infrastructure is widely used to enhance and expedite public- and private-sector policies and decisions for the benefit of Idahoans and beyond"

### **Draft Mission:**

"Idaho's geospatial community will deliver a robust statewide spatial data infrastructure that supports routine and extraordinary business needs"

- Mission: phrase "...and beyond" is a little fuzzy and ill-defined; some liked its forward feel
- Mission: need more emphasis on "public" ? (Note: use of term "business needs" construed to apply to private sector)
- Mission: could use more qualifiers to describe role, purpose of SDI—to convey such themes as "quality", "ease of use", "concise", "authoritative"
- Mission: change or add to "...widely used". Maybe phrase like, "...widely integrated into decision-making and policies..."

## Discussion on Draft Goals (reaction to draft Vision and Mission statements prepared by the Executive Steering Committee)

### **Draft Goals:**

1. Secure sustained funding to support SDI implementation and management by the end of 2010.
  2. Develop and establish pathways for stewarding Framework data by March 1, 2009.
  3. Create and effectively communicate a sound business case for the SDI that promotes alignment of investments in spatial data and technology by the end of June 30, 2009.
  4. Support regional GIS user groups and establish or enhance regional centers to aggregate and extend access to Framework and the technology to use it, with emphasis on low-resourced jurisdictions and organizations not able to maintain GIS capability on their own beginning in 2009.
  5. Conceive and implement an improved governance and coordination structure, with appropriate legislation, policies, and management practices that support realization of the SDI by the end of 2009.
  6. Support local data development through collaboratively developing standards, supporting partnerships, and providing funding by July 1, 2010.
  7. Create an effective communication, education and support environment and tools that increase awareness, broad support, and wide use of the SDI.
  8. Expand the use of spatial data and technology into new business areas.
- Discussed the fact that these goals create a basis for defining more detailed initiatives and actions. In other words, in the strategic and business plans, multiple initiatives of a more specific nature will be defined under each of these goals and have timing, resources, and performance criteria defined.
  - Goal #7: add "...ease of use..."
  - Goal #4: term "low-resourced" is good
  - Need to include "values" as part of strategic plan
  - Planning horizon: Plans will be prepared with a 5-year planning horizon but maybe there is a need to look beyond five years to provide a context for longer term future.

## Potential Initiatives (ideas on important initiatives to be cited in the strategic and business plans for SDI development)

- Complete data standards for framework themes
- State Public Records Laws: potential amendments or at least more consistent interpretation to remove ambiguity and in consistency throughout the state in the way they impact policies for GIS data access, distribution, fee setting
- Examine statewide program for Recorder fees applied for building a fund to support GIS database development (similar to Oregon ORMAP program or Wisconsin WLIA program)
- Convey idea of selling GIS based on the applications and services for users—not just the data
- Explore nontraditional financing strategies—funding sources different than normal general fund budget allocations

- Improve, enhance, and get more sustainable resourcing for statewide GIS portal (Inside Idaho). U of I is well positioned for expansion of program
- Examine more ways to integrate GIS with “non-GIS” applications and data sources. Define ways to integrate or embed spatial operations and data with more mainstream business applications (transportation, public health)

#### Other Information and Ideas

- Valley County is ready to move into GIS program but can use help in planning and making a business case
- Key GIS applications areas are in support of economic development, commerce, and education. GIS can be used as a very effective education tool (elementary, high-school)
- Some participants argued for GIS programs to become integrated with the management of the organizations’ IT management structure
- National Forests: organized into two regions in Idaho. Land ownership inside forests is fairly well consolidated (not a lot of fragmentation or private inholdings)
- Need GIS applications that allow map access as simple as using paper maps
- Need consistent policies for fee setting for GIS data and products
- Could use consistent legal interpretation of liability issues and consistent disclaimer statements
- Important role for Idaho Association of Counties
- IGC data standards only applicable to state agencies—need better way to convey and get adopted at local level
- Broad access to GIS data and services should consider the “Google Earth” model—easily accepted Web-based services with easy access to data and commonly needed applications.
- In Idaho, GIS and surveying not in conflict.